



Isabrand Sander



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BISHOP ISABRAND SANDER

Isabrand Sander was born in Ogden, Utah, the son of Dutch Immigrant parents. His school days ended when he was thirteen years old. His father returned to his native Holland as an LDS missionary, and Isabrand was left to help support his mother, five sisters, and two brothers. By the time he was seventeen he was a salesman for the John Scrowcroft Company with territory covering parts of Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. Because of his youth, he was bold as well as innocent. He would approach men that more experienced salesmen knew better than to spend their time on, and bring in accounts the company had considered impossible to obtain.

In 1916 he was sent to Vernal to open a dry-goods store. It was called "The Golden Rule Store." It was well named because Bishop Sander tried to use "The Golden Rule" as a guide throughout his life. His first summer in Vernal he met Mary Merkley, the daughter of a solid, hard working farmer who was very concerned about the intentions of this "city slicker" toward his daughter; but Isabrand persisted and finally sold them both on the idea that his intentions were honorable.

When the newlyweds arrived home from their wedding in the Salt Lake Temple there was a notice from the draft board that he had three weeks to get his business in order and report to the army.

After returning home from World War I served in France and Germany, he was elected to the legislature. His supporters hoped that he would be able to bring a railroad line into the Uintah Basin which was isolated from the rest of the state; but he saw the limitations of railroads. Instead he dreamed dreams of fleets of trucks carrying freight over paved highways, so he worked on the legislation that would be the beginning of Highway 40 across the state. It was the better solution to the problem, but it was not what the people had asked him to do so his career as a legislator came to an end.

The depression struck Vernal along with the rest of the country. When the local co-operative store he had managed closed its doors, he opened a small mercantile. People with no money and no work would ask for credit. He could not give it to them, but he knew how badly they needed food and clothing if they made

3rd Ward

such requests. As they left he would fill a bag with groceries and other necessities for them until he had given his store away. He would tell his wife, "I know they can't pay, but I can't send them away hungry." After three years there was no longer money with which to re-stock the shelves.

Brother Sander loaded his wife and four little girls into the truck he had left over from his mercantile days and moved to Provo. he managed to find work hauling gilsonite in hundred pound bags from Myton to a pipe plant in Provo. It was backbreaking work, but it was the best he could do to provide for his family. For a backhaul he started carrying barrels of gasoline and oil for the Standard Oil Company of California that was opening up its Utah territory. It was difficult to find customers. With the depression at its deepest, few people had money, and he could not extend credit. But at a time many men were giving up, Isabrand Sander was grasping at a new beginning. As years went on the barrels were replaced with larger slip tanks, then came the day he was able to buy a small tank truck. As tanks and trucks grew larger he was able to give up hauling gilsonite. By 1939 it could be seen that customers would be served better and trips shortened if the family moved to Heber City.

Houses were hard to find in Heber City, but finally the Sander family was able to renovate and move into the James W. Clyde home on the corner of Main Street and Fourth South that had stood vacant for twelve years.

Bishop Sander's first calling in the Heber Third Ward was one of his favorites. He taught the group that is now called the "young adults," and the class grew under his leadership. He was called from that assignment to be the Ward Sunday School Superintendent, then he was called as the Stake Sunday School Superintendent. In November of 1945 he was sustained as the fourth bishop of the Heber Third Ward. He chose J. Linden Chapman and Jay DeGraff as Counselors with Francis C. Cowley as ward clerk. When Brother DeGraff moved from the community, Francis Cowley became a counselor, and Verd Murdock was made the Ward Clerk. In 1947 the ward had grown in membership and activity to the point that it was divided into the Third and Fourth Wards. J. Linden Chapman became the Bishop of the Fourth Ward while Bishop Sander continued as bishop of the Third Ward with Andrew McConkie and Ferris Clegg as counselors and Ray Berg as Clerk.

It is a challenging job to lead a ward after a division has been made. People sometimes resent the boundary changes and the breaking up of friendships, much of the leadership you had depended on is gone, and those who have been happy to let others carry the responsibilities or those that have been totally inactive must be convinced that they are the ones who will fill the callings and carry the load. Bishop Sander reached out to the members of his ward. Sometimes it was his dogged persistence that moved people; sometimes it was others seeing the long hours he put into serving that helped them decide they could help, too. As happens with such divisions, people came to help and stayed to serve.

What were some of the accomplishments of Bishop Sander's time of service?

The chapel that stood on the corner of Main Street and Fourth South needed to be updated and redecorated. Ward members donated many hours of labor needed to improve the Relief Society and Junior Sunday School facilities, and paint it throughout; creating a pleasant, attractive environment in which to worship The Lord and learn His gospel. An outdoor fireplace was built on the south lawn to be used for class parties and ward outings. The scouts and their leaders gathered and sold junk iron to earn money to build and furnish their own scout room.

World War II had ended. Young men and women returning home from duty in the armed forces were ready to serve missions as well as were those who were just coming of age. Many church activities had been suspended "for the duration," now was the time to start again. The church was also introducing new programs to meet the changing times. The welfare teaching of storing a year's supply of food could not be stressed too much with wartime rationing, but members were able to replenish and build their storage. With tires and gasoline no longer rationed people could attend the temple more often. One of the most notable trends was a stronger emphasis on programs for the youth to help insulate coming generations against a new wave of problems that a faster-paced society would bring.

Bishop Sander worked early and late on the ward welfare farm. He started a weekly news bulletin, "The Third Ward Call" to help the ward family know more about each other and feel more a part of the ward. His home was open for weekly "firesides" until he

had his attack. At that time other members of the ward took over the hosting of them.

Bishop Sander loved the people of his ward. He rejoiced with them in their happy moments; when there were trials he would be there gentle and supportive to give any encouragement and help he could.

In addition to his ward duties he was chairman of the Stake Bishops Council. As such he was in charge of remodeling the Bishop's Storehouse in Midway and overseeing the Stake Welfare Farm.

November 11, 1950 Bishop Sander was released. When he had suffered his heart attack he had been advised to move to Salt Lake City where the winters were milder. His health continued to decline, yet he served as a counselor to two bishops in the South Thirteenth Ward. He was still serving in that capacity at the time of his death in 1962.

MARY SANDER

Wife of Bishop Sander

Mary Sander has been described as "a woman ahead of her time." She knew what she wanted to do with her life. She sacrificed her own pleasures, and committed her time, talent, and money to serving The Lord and His children.

While she was living in Vernal she would worry about the children that brought cold lunches to school in pails so she organized a group of women to prepare and serve a daily hot lunch years before the government started its school lunch program.

She knew that schools and homes must work together for effective learning, and helped organize the PTA in the state of Utah.

During World War II there was a shortage of teachers. As a young woman she had taught English, drama, and physical education at Ricks Academy, but she no longer had a current teachers certificate. She asked the Superintendent of Schools if she might teach without pay. The Superintendent exclaimed, "Mrs. Sander, do you realize what that would do to teachers' pay?!!!" Now schools are advertising for people to share their time and talents.

Twenty years before the church instituted a program for young people to own and carry their scriptures, she had a "project" to help her Sunday School pupils earn money to buy their own. Forty-one young people of the Third Ward bought them because of her influence.

Mary Sander loved people as much as her husband did. If she saw someone walking past her house with an armload of groceries, she would stop whatever she was doing to drive them home, or she might invite a hitch-hiker standing in front of the house in for a hot meal. Her son-in-law tells the story about eating dinner one afternoon. His mother-in-law had made lemon meringue pie for dessert. It was sitting in the middle of the table to be admired during the meal. Someone came to the door. Sister Sander took care of whatever the visitor had come for, then came to the table, picked up the pie, and sent it home with the caller.

Many strangers came to their door. Transients displaced by the depression or servicemen passing through would inquire in town for assistance. They were often told, "There is a Mormon bishop that lives in a white house a few blocks down Main Street." The Sanders' would do whatever they could to help them.

After the family moved to Salt Lake City, Sister Sander continued to serve in a variety of church callings in her new ward. She was also found many other ways to help those around her. She was especially attentive to the older women living alone in the heart of the city who were not close to their families; they needed her friendship as much as her help. She made herself available to take them to church, shopping, doctor's appointments, and do what she could to make their lives fuller. In 1967 she drove to Heber City to see the new Third Ward Chapel. Bishop Berg and his wife drove around town with her. They gave her a tour of the new buildings and showed her all it had to offer. As she prepared to leave, she thanked them and told them it was one of the best days she had ever spent.

Mary Sander passed away in 1974. She requested two songs be sung at her funeral. They were "Nay, Speak No Ill" and "Angry Words, Oh, Let Them Never." She told her daughter, "I've always loved being a teacher, and I want to keep teaching to the very end."